

PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST

GRADE: 17

FLSA: EXEMPT

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASS:

The Public Information Specialist performs intermediate professional work involved in the dissemination of City news and information as editor of the monthly 12-page City newsletter and monthly 4-page employee newsletter; through news releases, public service announcements; and radio spots and in the development of production of brochures, booklets and other informational materials with meaningful impact on the services provided by City departments. The incumbent must be reactive, supplying information on specialized matters with contacts within the City and with outside media personnel. The physical demands are light. Occasionally the incumbent is required to lift printed materials up to 25lbs. The working conditions are good but the position can be stressful when working with strict deadlines. Hours will include some nights and weekends. The work is subject to general policies practices and procedures under the direction of the Public Information Manager.

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL CITY EMPLOYEES:

- Learn and demonstrate an understanding of City, department, division and team goals.
- Serve and meet the needs of customers during routine or emergency situations.
- Ability and willingness to work as part of a team, to demonstrate team skills and to perform a fair share of team responsibilities.
- Ability to assess his/her work performance or the work performance of the team.
- Plan and organize his/her work, time and resources, and if applicable that of subordinates.
- Contribute to the development of others and/or the working unit or overall organization.
- Produce desired work outcomes including quality, quantity and timeliness.
- Communicate effectively with peers, supervisors, subordinates and people to whom service is provided.
- Understand and value differences in employees and value input from others.
- Consistently report to work and work assignments prepared and on schedule.
- Consistently display a positive behavior with regard to work, willingly accept constructive criticism and be respectful of others.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

- Plans content, researches, writes and edits articles for the City Newsletter, Rockville Reports, and the employee newsletter with supervisory review.
- Designs layouts on PC using Adobe In Design layout program.
- Writes headlines, and photo captions; selects photos and suggests artwork.

- Produces special inserts for Rockville Reports such as the Election Guide and Annual Report, and the quarterly Focus on the Arts insert.
- Responsible for the timely release of City news and information through news releases, public service announcements, and verbal contact with the press.
- Writes new releases and public service announcements.
- Writes and edits six-month calendar of events.
- Composes, edits, and proofs written copy for City departments including reports, flyers, and applications for awards.
- Develops and produces brochures, booklets, ads, and other informational and promotional materials in conjunction with other Public Information and Graphics staff and staff from City departments requiring these materials.
- Assists departments in planning and implementing publicity campaigns for City events and programs. This includes advising departments on publicity tactics and assisting them with implementation by arranging for display ads in various periodicals, writing news releases and public services announcements, securing free promotional time or coverage of events from television, radio, and newspapers.
- Maintains open lines of communication with press by advising of opportunities for articles and photos, providing a variety of written information, and responding to requests for assistance in setting up interviews, locating background materials, and confirming information.
- Handles inquiries from the public, other government agencies, the business community, civic organizations, and the media.
- Checks ads, flyers, letters, programs for events, and all other written materials for accuracy, clarity, and adherence to City policy (appearance and content) before they are printed for distribution to the public.
- Works with representatives of community groups to coordinate coverage of their activities in the City newsletter.
- Maintains photo file of all city photographs.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Required Training and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience substantially equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with major course work in journalism, public relations, English communication or related field and two years experience in the field of journalism, public relations or public information.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of, or ability to rapidly acquire knowledge procedures, and of the relationships between various City departments.
- Knowledge of standard guidelines and practices in public information and journalism.
- Knowledge of and advance skill in the use of office equipment and software including Adobe In Design.

- Skill in writing, editing, proofreading and page layout.
- Ability to take digital photographs, process the photos and catalogue them.
- Ability to produce professional publications that communicate the desired messages.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.